

City Council Finance Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday, June 25, 2013

7:00PM

Hurley Building

Present: Finance Committee members: Taylor, Terwilliger, Wade, White
Council members: Mayor Polimeni, Reston
City Staff: City Manager Forrest, Assistant City Manager White, City Attorney Smith, City Clerk/Treasurer Abdallah, City Planning Director Brown

1. 2012 Audit Report

Mr. John Rizzo from Toski & Co., P.C., the City's auditing firm, presented draft documents from the 2012 financial audit. These included draft Management Letter, Report to City Council, Financial Statement, Single Audit Report, and NYSDOT Single Audit Report. For the General Fund, 2012 revenues exceeded budget and expenditures were lower than budget, resulting in positive cash flow for the year. No material weaknesses were reported. The single recommendation from the 2011 audit dealing with the City's documentation of the Community Development Block Grant program was implemented successfully. The audit showed that the City is keeping its books in accordance with accepted accounting principles and that it is in sound financial condition. Mr. Rizzo was invited to present the final audit report to Council at its July 2 meeting.

Action Taken: Committee voted 4:0 to accept the draft reports.

2. Uniform Notice of Claim Act

City Manager Forrest and City Attorney Smith introduced a draft resolution that authorizes the City to file a Certificate with the NYS Secretary of State designating the Secretary of State as the City's local government agent for service of notices of claim. Such action is required as a result of a recent change in NYS General Municipal Law Section 53.

Action Taken: Committee voted 4:0 to recommend to Council, in the form of a resolution, approval of this proposed resolution.

3. Code Enforcement Fees

As part of an initiative to review the entire City fee structure prior to 2014 budget workshops this November, Committee reviewed the Building, Planning, and Zoning fee schedule at this meeting. In particular, discussion centered on staff recommendations for increases related to certain services and no change for others. Specifics were listed in 6/20/2013 letter from City Planning Director Brown to City Manager Forrest. The principles used by staff in making the recommendations were: 1) fees should reflect actual costs used to perform the service, and 2) fees should be charged for targeted services for a subset of the community vs. services benefitting the community as a

whole. Mr. Brown and Mr. Forrest explained the rationale behind each line item recommendation.

A proposed doubling of the Rental Housing Inspection fee raised significant comment and opposition from a small group of landlords and supporters who attended the meeting. The group also questioned the need for the program, beyond just the fee question, and cited a few other communities who do not have such a program or who have less-frequent inspections.

After much discussion among Committee/Council members and between Council and the public, it was proposed to informally accept, as a starting point for the 2014 budget, the full list of recommended fees with the following exceptions: 1) Mobile Home placement/replacement – increase from \$60 to \$100 (vs. \$200 recommended), and 2) Rental Housing Inspection – leave unchanged at \$50 + \$20 per unit (vs. \$100 + \$40 recommended).

Action Taken: Committee voted 3:1 to accept the above proposal. Committee also asked staff to inquire with local municipalities about their Rental Housing Inspection programs and associated fees and to report back at a future meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45PM. The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 23 at 7:00PM at the Hurley Building.

Respectfully submitted,

James Terwilliger
Finance Committee Chair